

YCPARMIA Safety Journal

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Safety Is in Your Hands

Do your share for a safer workplace

When you think about workplace safety responsibilities, you probably think about all the regulations and all the requirements OSHA puts on management to identify hazards and protect you and your co-workers. And it's true that management does have a big share in the responsibility for workplace safety. But OSHA also gives you a share of responsibility for safety on the job.

In return for the right to a safe workplace, OSHA assigns certain specific responsibilities to you and your co-workers, including the responsibility to:

- Obey OSHA standards.
- Follow workplace safety and health rules.
- Use assigned personal protective equipment (PPE).
- Participate in required safety training.
- Report hazardous conditions to management so they can take swift corrective action.
- Report job-related accidents, injuries, and illness to your supervisor and get medical attention.
- Cooperate with OSHA inspectors who come to inspect our facility.

In addition to these OSHA-assigned safety responsibilities, we ask you to also:

- Take responsibility for learning everything you need to know about your job and work area so that you can always work safely.
- Avoid taking risks and engaging in any unsafe acts.
- Talk to your supervisor if you have a question about your safety.
- Cooperate in our safety inspection and hazard analysis programs.
- Participate in safety committees and other safety initiatives.
- Look for ways to make your job and the workplace safer and make suggestions about how to do that.

If we all do our share and take responsibility for our safety and the safety of all our co-workers, we can't fail in our mission to prevent accidents, injuries, and work-related illness. Sure, it's a big job, and we have to remain vigilant and strive every day to hunt down and eliminate hazards. But together we can do it! Won't you pitch in and join with your co-workers? We need you to succeed.

SECONDHAND SMOKE RISKS DECLINE

Fewer Americans are exposed to second-hand smoke than a decade ago says the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). The change is attributed to two things: stricter smoking laws and a drop in U.S. smoking rates.

This is great news because according to CDC, secondhand smoke contains at least 250 chemicals known to be toxic, including more than 50 that can cause cancer. CDC says there is no risk-free level of second-hand smoke exposure. Even brief exposure can be dangerous.

Over time, nonsmokers who are exposed to secondhand smoke have 25 to 30 percent greater risk of heart disease and a 20 to 30 percent greater risk of lung cancer. Breathing secondhand smoke also increases the risk of heart attack, and is especially dangerous to people who already have heart disease.

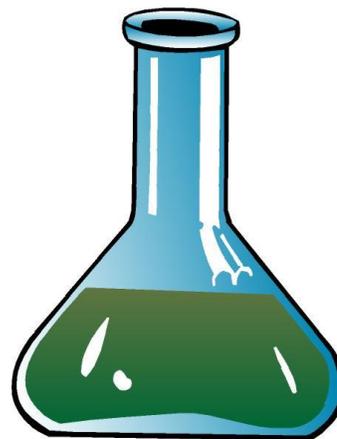
Secondhand smoke exposure has an especially negative impact on infants and children. It can cause sudden death syndrome in infants. In older children, secondhand smoke can cause respiratory infections and slow their lung growth. It can also cause ear problems and more frequent and severe asthma attacks.

Smart Science

Match the definition to the characteristic

You don't have to be a scientist to work with hazardous chemicals. But you do need to know some basic scientific terms so that you'll be able to identify hazards and take proper precautions. Below are some chemical characteristics that you might find in a material safety data sheet (MSDS) when you're looking for safety information about a hazardous substance. See if you can match the definition to the chemical characteristic by writing the letter for the definition in the space before the appropriate characteristic.

- | | |
|-------------------------|---|
| 1. ___ Boiling point | A. Gas, liquid, or solid |
| 2. ___ Specific gravity | B. Temperature at which liquid turns to gas |
| 3. ___ Physical state | C. How much of chemical will dissolve in water |
| 4. ___ Solubility | D. Temperature at which solid turns to liquid |
| 5. ___ Freezing point | E. Tells you whether chemical will float or sink in water |
| 6. ___ Vapor density | F. How fast chemical puts vapors into the air |
| 7. ___ Melting point | G. Temperature at which a liquid turns to a solid |
| 8. ___ Evaporation rate | H. Tells you whether a chemical will rise or sink in air |



Answers:

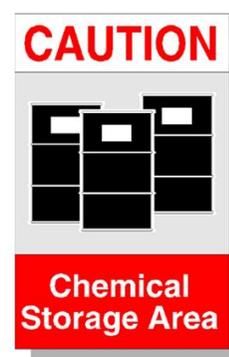
- (1) B
- (2) E—Chemicals with a specific gravity below 1 will float and above 1 will sink.
- (3) A
- (4) C
- (5) G
- (6) H—Chemicals with a vapor density below 1 will rise and above 1 will sink.
- (7) D
- (8) F

No Contact, Less Risk

Five tips for reducing chemical exposure

The best way to avoid the risks of working with hazardous chemicals is to reduce exposure. Here are five ways to do that:

- 1. Identify potential hazards.** Begin by reading the label on the container and then move on to the material safety data sheet (MSDS) for complete safety and health information. Make sure you understand the consequences of an accident—for example, the health effects, the potential for fire, and the possibility that contamination could spread.
- 2. Use the right personal protective equipment (PPE).** The label and MSDS will tell you what to wear and why. Don't forget to inspect PPE before each use to make sure it's in good condition.
- 3. Follow safe handling procedures.** Again, the MSDS will provide safe handling information. You'll need to know about such things as ventilation requirements, storage, and use rules. If you don't understand something, ask your supervisor.
- 4. Practice safe hygiene.** Keep food and drinks out of chemical work areas. Wash thoroughly after working with chemicals. And wash your soiled work clothes separately from family laundry.
- 5. Be prepared for emergencies.** Know the proper procedures for handling leaks and spills, evacuating the work area, and providing effective first aid for exposures.



Walk the Safety Walk

And don't forget about your feet!

There are somewhere between 100,000 and 200,000 foot injuries on the job every year. Think about what it would be like if you injured one or both of your feet. How would you get around? How could you work? Think about the pain every time you put weight on your foot. And think about the possibility that the injury would cause permanent damage and leave you disabled.

To avoid foot injuries, you have to recognize and avoid foot hazards, such as:

- * Heavy falling or dropped objects
- * Rolling objects or equipment
- * Puncture wounds from sharp objects
- * Slips, trips, and falls
- * Splashes of chemicals or hot substances
- * Electric shock

You then need to make sure your feet are protected against the hazards you face. You may need to wear safety shoes or some other type of protective footwear. Your supervisor will tell you the exact type of protection you need. Even if you don't need special protective footwear, wear comfortable, sturdy shoes with nonslip soles to work. That way, if you run into any foot hazards, you'll have some protection and you may be able to avoid an injury. After all, who can afford to be off their feet for days or even weeks?

Safety Training

When, why, and how

Safety training sessions and safety meetings provide you with the skills and information you need to prevent accidents and avoid injuries and illnesses on the job. Generally speaking, you'll receive safety training:

- When you're hired
- When your job duties or assignments change
- When new equipment or materials bring new hazards to the workplace
- When there are changes in safety policies and procedures
- When OSHA regulations change

You'll also receive periodic refresher training to keep your skills and knowledge up to date. And you'll be retrained whenever there's an incident such as an accident or near miss that indicates safety problems. We'll also retrain when there's a decline in safety performance on the part of individual employees or a whole group of workers.

The type of training—classroom training, demonstrations, computer-assisted training, and so on—will depend on the subject and the needs of the trainees. And our trainers will do their best to make sure you are well prepared to identify hazards and take proper precautions.



SAFETY AND THE BAD OLD DAYS

Workplace safety has come a long way in the last 100 years. In 1909, most workers faced dangerous, dirty, exhausting working conditions. There were poisons in the air and in the materials workers handled with their bare hands. Workplaces were often very hot or very cold. Machines were noisy, unguarded, and unpredictable.

Children as young as 10 or 11 worked alongside adults. In fact, children were often prized employees because they were cheaper and with their little hands, they could more easily reach into operating machinery to clear jams and make adjustments.

Many women and girls ended up in sweat shops sewing clothes under terrible conditions. They often worked 14 or 16 hours a day without breaks, health insurance, or any kind of safety rules. When one was injured and couldn't work, she was out of luck—and out of a job.

When one New York sweatshop packed with 600 women and girls was consumed in 1911 by a raging fire, 146 workers either died from the fire and smoke or jumped to their deaths from the upper floors of the multi-story factory. There were only a few buckets available to put out the fire, and no one had thought about how workers on the upper floors might escape if a fire broke out.

We've come a long way, but we can always improve safety conditions and performance. Help make our workplace as safe as possible today and in the future.

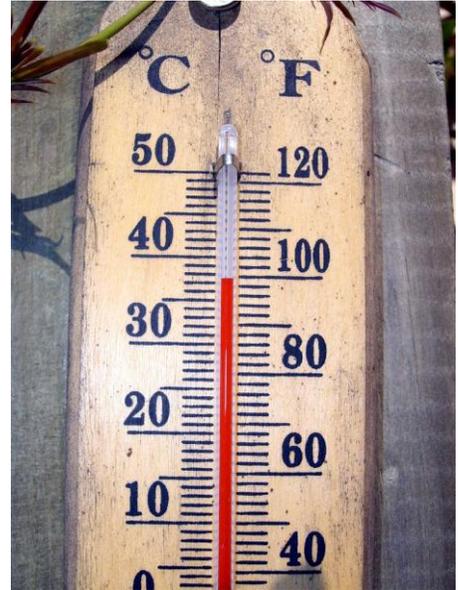
Heat!

Cal-OSHA's heat regulation (update)

Effective immediately, Cal-OSHA has issued a new interpretation of their Heat Illness Prevention regulation (8 CCR §3395). Basically, the new requirement is that an employer must have shade provided for workers anytime the temperature is predicted to reach 85°F during the day. To satisfy the requirement, a shade structure must be installed and ready for use before workers begin working in the morning. The requirement is triggered on any day when the National Weather Service predicts temperatures of 85°F or higher as of 5 p.m. on the previous day. It is also triggered whenever the actual temperature exceeds 90°F, whether predicted or not. Shade must be provided within one-quarter mile or a 5-minute walk, whichever is shorter.

A vehicle with the air conditioner operating is an acceptable substitute for shade. A vehicle without air conditioning in operation is not acceptable. Additional information is available from Cal-OSHA at the following websites:

www.dir.ca.gov/DOSH/HeatIllnessInfo.html
www.dir.ca.gov/DOSH/heatIllnessQA.html



What About Accidents?

Rate your accident prevention know-how

Workplace accidents don't just happen; we let them happen through carelessness, errors, and risk-taking behavior. That means we have the power to prevent accidents. Rate your accident prevention know-how with this quiz:

1. Are most workplace accidents caused by:
a. Unsafe acts by employees? b. Unsafe conditions?
2. Is being involved in an accident:
a. Just a matter of luck—being in the wrong place at the wrong time?
b. The result of unsafe acts or unsafe conditions?
3. When you perform a familiar task, should you:
a. Think about what could go wrong?
b. Figure nothing could go wrong, since you've done the job before?
4. When you're not sure about a hazard or a safety precaution, should you:
a. Proceed with caution? b. Ask your supervisor?
5. If you encounter a hazard and can't eliminate it, should you:
a. Report it? b. Ignore it if you're not actually at risk?
6. Should you inspect personal protective equipment (PPE):
a. Once a week? b. Before each use?
7. If you see a co-worker doing something unsafe, should you:
a. Mind your own business? b. Talk to your co-worker about your concern?



Answers: (1) a (2) b (3) a (4) b (5) a (6) b (7) b